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BIBLICAL AND SEMITIC STUDIES: Critical and Historical Essays by the Members of the Semitic and Biblical Faculty of Yale University. New York: Scribner, 1901. Pp. xii+330. \$2.50, *net*.

THE papers contained in this volume are the outcome of the proceedings of the Semitic and Biblical Club of Yale University. The present brief notice confines itself to the essays on Old Testament and Arabic themes.

The contribution of Professor E. L. Curtis, "The Tribes of Israel" (pp. 3-37), deals with (1) the mention of the tribes in the Old Testament, (2) the genealogical origin of the tribes, (3) the separate tribes, (4) the settlement of the tribes in Canaan. These themes are treated with the accuracy of statement and soberness of judgment characteristic of the author. On account of the necessity of dealing with a multitude of questions in small space, he has been obliged to content himself for the most part with giving a summary of opinions. Many readers will be disappointed at the meagerness of the assured results, but for this the present condition of biblical science, and not the author himself, is chiefly responsible. Here only a few of the most important points of the discussion can be noted. As to sources of information, "the material found in the priestly writings (P and Chronicles) can be almost entirely ignored. Its significance is theological rather than historical" (p. 5). The deuteronomic writings are of scarcely more value, since their "conception of the early organization and life of Israel is of the same general nature as that in the priestly writings" (*ibid.*). It is from the legendary materials contained in the prophetic narratives of the Hexateuch, and especially from the Song of Deborah, the Blessing of Jacob, and the Blessing of Moses, that the history of Israel's tribes must be constructed (pp. 5 ff.). As to this tribal history, the twelve tribes were probably first grouped together as Israel in the time of David (p. 12). Jacob is an older figure than Israel, which is the proper national name of the people, belonging originally, however, to the Northern Kingdom, the kingdom represented especially by the tribe of Ephraim. Israel, accordingly, is pre-eminently the father of Joseph. "Jacob actually represents an ancient tribe later incorporated or transmuted into Israel." Jacob-el was either a tribe or a place in Palestine in the sixteenth century B. C. (p. 13). Isaac may originally have been "Isaac-el," like Israel, Ishmael, Jezreel, etc. (p. 15). "The basis for the belief in the historical character of Abraham has always seemed sentimental rather than

scientific" (p. 17). "The truth is that Abraham is too early in the genealogy to have any claim for historicity as a real person" (p. 16). In connection with these remarks one might be tempted to cite the criterion of historicity suggested by the author on p. 32: "The story of the sojourn in Egypt seems to be too thoroughly imbedded in the Old Testament literature not to have some historical basis." In all fairness, however, it must be admitted that it is easier to account for the popular fiction of an ancestral hero than for the rise and persistence of a belief in an epoch-making national event.

In dealing with the origin and early history of the separate tribes, the author has fully availed himself of the suggestions that come from the Amarna tablets and the Egyptian monuments, *e. g.*, in the case of Asher (pp. 29 ff.). The whole discussion shows how much uncertainty still overhangs the times and places of Israel's manifold beginnings. The same remark may be extended to apply to the settlement of the tribes in Canaan, which forms the last topic treated by the author. On the whole, he inclines to the view that the general Hebrew tradition may be accepted, that "tribes came out of Egypt, sojourned and consolidated as worshippers of Yahwè in the pasture lands south of Judah, and then gained their territory east of the Jordan, . . . whence they crossed to western Palestine, the first attempt having been made by Judah, Simeon, and Levi. The last two of these tribes, if not the three, suffered a defeat at Shechem, and they [then?] turned southward and there dwelt quite by themselves. The second attempt, whose tradition underlies the story of the book of Joshua, was made by the other tribes, especially Joseph, Issachar, and Zebulon, and was more successful" (pp. 35 ff.).

Of scarcely less importance for the great subject of the history of Israel is the timely and luminous contribution of Professors Kent and Sanders, "The Growth of Israelitish Law" (pp. 41-90). Fortunately this is a theme which may be treated with a large measure of certitude. The essential conditions are that we are able to distinguish, in the surviving codes and usages, between what is pre-Israelitish in origin, proceeding from the long antecedent Semitic civilizations, what is due to the contemporary influence of neighboring peoples, and what is of independent native development. Now, the chief biblical value of oriental research is not so much that it has confirmed the Scripture narratives of later Hebrew history as that it has thrown light on the internal evolution of the people of Jehovah. It has shown us, with more or less clearness and fulness, what is specifically Babylonian or

Arabian or Canaanitish, and has thus made all the more evident what Israel owed to a special inspiration and revelation. Nay, it has brought us a long step farther toward a right apprehension of what inspiration and revelation really are. It is a conspicuous merit of this essay that it makes these distinctions fundamental. It sets forth (1) Israel's original heritage of customs and laws; (2) influences which led to the revision and expansion of the law; (3) conditions before the establishment of the kingdom; (4) Israelitish law in the making; (5) the growth of the written law; (6) the growth of the oral law; (7) conclusions.

We must take space to quote a sentence or two from the "Conclusions" (pp. 87-90), so as to indicate at least the drift of the discussion:

"The laws found in the Old Testament came, not from one author, but from a myriad; not from one generation, but from not less than eight centuries of generations." "The prophets were the precursors and inspirers of the law-makers." "The priests, as guardians of the sanctuary, teachers of the people, judges of important causes, and the mouthpieces of Yahwè's will, were the real law-makers of Israel." "Beginning at an early date, all primitive laws were attributed to Moses, precisely as proverbs were attributed to Solomon and psalms to David." (The remainder of this paragraph is a splendid justification of the Mosaic "fiction.") "Later codes, like the Deuteronomic, the Holiness legislation, and the Priestly Code, were prepared privately, and existed for some time before they were submitted to the nation." "While the Israelites retained ancient laws on the statute-books, they usually enforced those of the latest code whenever this (as in the case of the law regarding sacrifice) invalidated ancient custom and regulations."

In the detailed discussions there is scarcely anything to be censured as inaccurate. It was twenty-five shekels ("half a mina"), and not "fifty" (p. 66), that, according to ancient Babylonian law, a husband had to pay his divorced wife as an indemnity. It is at least premature to call the code to which this law belongs "Sumerian" (pp. 42 and 66). Its linguistic usage is Semitic throughout, and at the most the "Sumerian" form is a translation from the Babylonian.

Professor C. C. Torrey contributes the last essay of the volume, "The Mohammedan Conquest of Egypt and North Africa" (pp. 279-330). It is a translation, with a few explanatory notes, of an important Arabic work of the ninth century A. D., written by a native of Egypt, Abu'l Qâsim 'Abd-er-Rahmân. The work itself is unpublished, and the present translation is made from the four manuscripts now known to exist. The extract constitutes about one-tenth of the whole history,

and treats of the fortunes of the Mohammedans in Egypt and North Africa between 642 and 705 A. D.

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THE New Testament portion of these studies is given to a discussion of the "Significance of the Transfiguration" and to an examination of the "Argument and Doctrinal Relationship of Stephen's Speech." Both studies are worthy of careful consideration, not only because of the conclusions reached, but also as examples of critical method. Dr. Moulton prefaces his actual inquiry into the meaning of the transfiguration by a review of the accounts as given by each evangelist and in 2 Peter, and by a brief discussion of the several theories which have tried to explain the scene itself. Some facts of much interest and importance come to light in the presentation of the variations of the different accounts, as, *e. g.*, the differences of conception regarding the order and significance of the events on the mount, modifications consistent with the purpose of each writer. The author concludes rightly for the comparative originality of Mark, and gives us many suggestive comments in his estimate of variations. It is, however, in the discussion of the "theories" of the transfiguration scene that we are made to feel the real difficulties that center about this supreme hour in Christ's later ministry. Was the transfiguration an objective reality, was it a vision, or are we to explain it as an apocalyptic construction, setting forth great realities in forms of the imagination? The last theory has had strong seconding in German criticism, and with much plausible ingenuity it changes what the church has always looked upon as an actual experience in our Lord's life into a structure of the imagination. Dr. Moulton's own view, stated after a fair consideration of the themes referred to, is that the transfiguration had "its place in the course of real history," and that "we are here in the domain of fact, and not in that of the imagination." The third section of his discussion comes directly to his theme, the significance of the event, and this part of the essay is full, comprehensive, and satisfactory. The historical situation is given with marked clearness, and the necessity and purpose of the "transcendent glory" are equally well exhibited:

What is primarily set forth in the transfiguration is the sanction given to Jesus by the Law and the Prophets in this dark and threatening hour of his ministry. . . . There came a day which stood out from all others in this

northern sojourn when, in the mountain solitude, apart from all that could bind their hearts to earth, he unfolded to them the mystery of God's word. He showed to them that, along with the promise of the future realization of their noblest aspirations, there was also shadowed forth the impending suffering of him who should come as the Messiah.

In other words, the scene is critical in the development of the honored disciples. It belongs just where it is placed historically. It is a necessity of experience, not a later imaginative interpretation of experience. It both confirms and anticipates. It sets its seal to the reality of a suffering Messiah, and prefigures the glory to which that suffering should lead. The whole scene is thus "primarily significant in marking the time and experience when this new conception first gained lodgment in the minds of the apostles."

The second paper, by Professor Bacon, can have but scant justice done it in the space at our disposal. Its keen analysis, broad learning, and strong argumentative grasp make it a formidable criticism of the generally received view of Stephen's speech. To begin with, this is not Stephen's speech, "for he who places this splendid piece of rhetoric in the mouth of the proto-martyr looks forth himself upon a wider audience than Stephen's." Nor is it the composition of the author of the Acts. The speaker is in line rather with the Alexandrian tradition. He takes the anti-Jewish Alexandrian point of view, and his whole line of argumentation comports with this. According to Professor Bacon, the speech, as it is now placed, is not in its proper setting. Removing it, therefore, from its present forensic setting, he finds that it deals with three institutions: (1) the Abrahamic inheritance, *κληρονομία*; (2) the Mosaic revelation, the *λόγια ζῶντα*; (3) the Davidic presence of God in Zion, *σκήνωμα*. The speaker, in his review of the three periods of sacred history, has a twofold object, viz.: (a) "to prove that the institutions of the former dispensation were not ultimate, but typical, foreshadowing those of the messianic age; and (b) to prove that its theocratic leaders and prophets were analogously types of the Messiah himself in their efforts for redemption, as well as in the rejection they suffered at the hands of the people." Before entering upon the method of interpretation or argumentation the linguistic affinities of the section are carefully examined, and the speech is found to be of "the type of Hellenistic Greek framed on the model of the LXX." Each division of the address is then looked into to discover its doctrinal conceptions and their literary affinities. In each case the conceptions and method of presentation are Alexandrian.

"The effort to spiritualize the promise to Abraham from *κληρονομία* to *λατρεία*, from a territorial to a religious sense, is characteristic of the Alexandrian writers" (p. 238). In 7 : 42, *i. e.*, in the second part of the speech —

"We have as sharp a distinction as in Barnabas and Justin between the *λόγια ζῶντα* originally delivered to Moses for the people in fulfilment of the promise, whose time for fulfilment had now come, that they should serve him in the appointed place, and the ceremonial law" (p. 264). "Our author agrees with the Clementine writer that the temple-building of Solomon was an act of tyrannous ambition, perverting a place of prayer into a display of royal magnificence. Herein he is followed, as we know, by Barnabas, etc." (p. 272).

These are but sentences taken from a carefully welded argument which aims to prove that we have in this speech a kind of thinking and reasoning which lines up with the efforts of the great apologists, and which is inspired by Alexandria. A reply to all this involves a step-by-step consideration of the exegesis involved. The speech, according to Professor Bacon's interpretation, cannot be historical, and in that assumption he is confronted by some of the best students of these very chapters of the Acts. Whether, however, one agrees with the conclusions of the paper or not, he must be grateful for the masterly, suggestive, and stimulating discussion which it offers. It compels one to examine once more this part of the Word, and one can but feel that the serious objection to all that is given us lies, not in the possible Alexandrianism of the speech, but in the doubt which is cast upon its historicity.

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OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY. By G. WOOSUNG WADE. With three maps. London: Methuen, 1901. Pp. vi + 532. 6s.

IN this handy volume Dr. Wade surveys Old Testament history from the creation of the world to the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, including the Maccabean-period for the sake of the book of Daniel. The author is clear in style, concise without meagerness or loss of vividness, and progressive in the development of his theme. He has a standpoint from which to view the Old Testament records, is ever conscious of that position, and consistently carries his general conception through his work, interpreting, disposing, and relating his material in accordance with his opinion of the nature of his sources. He